

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A PROPOSED AMENDMENT
TO THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS
CHAPTER 135-6 REGULATION OF LICENSES
AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the authority set forth below, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists (hereinafter "Board") proposes an amendment to the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, Chapter 135-5 Regulation of Licenses, Rule 135-6-.03 Biennial Renewal Cycle, (hereinafter "proposed rule amendment").

The proposed rule amendments clarify the time frame and the requirements for completion of the biennial renewal cycle.

This notice, together with an exact copy of the proposed rule amendments and a synopsis of the proposed rule amendment, is being mailed to all persons who have requested, in writing, that they be placed on a mailing list. A copy of this notice, an exact copy of the proposed rule amendments, and a synopsis of the proposed rule amendment may be reviewed during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except official State holidays, at the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. These documents will also be available for review on the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists office website at www.sos.state.ga.us/plb/counselors or by contacting the Board office at 478-207-2440.

A public hearing is scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m. on September 12, 2008 in the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217 to provide the public an opportunity to comment upon and provide input into the proposed rule amendment. At the public hearing anyone may present data, make a statement, comment or offer a viewpoint or argument whether orally or in writing. Lengthy statements or statements of a considerable technical or economic nature, as well as previously recorded messages, must be submitted for the official record. Oral statements should be presented in writing. Written comments are welcomed. Such written comments must be legible and signed, should contain contact information from the maker (address, telephone number and/or facsimile number, etc.) and be actually received in the office prior to the close of business (5:00 p.m. EDT) on September 5, 2008. Written comments should be addressed to Randall D. Vaughn, Director, Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. Fax (478) 207-1363.

The Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists will consider the proposed rule amendment for adoption at its meeting scheduled to begin at 1:05 p.m. on September 12, 2008 at the Georgia Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. According to the Department of Law, State of Georgia, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists has the authority to adopt proposed rule amendments 135-6-.03 pursuant to authority contained in O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-4, 43-1-7, 43-1-19, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-14, 43-10A-15, 43-10A-16 and 43-10A-17.

At its meeting on August 12, 2008, the Board voted that the formulation and adoption of this rule does not impose excessive regulatory cost on any licensee and any cost to comply with the proposed rule cannot be reduced by a less expensive alternative that fully accomplishes the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-4, 43-1-7, 43-1-19, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-14, 43-10A-15, 43-10A-16 and 43-10A-17.

Additionally, at its meeting on August 12, 2008, the Board voted that it is not legal or feasible to meet the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-4, 43-1-7, 43-1-19, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-14, 43-10A-15, 43-10A-16 and 43-10A-17 to adopt or implement differing actions for businesses as listed in O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(3)(A), (B), (C), and (D). The formulation and adoption of these rules will impact every licensee in the same manner and each licensee is independently licensed in the field of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists.

For further information, contact the Board office at (478) 207-2440.

This notice is given in compliance with Section 4(a)(1) of the Georgia Administrative Procedures Act (O.C.G.A. §50-13-4).

This 12th day of August, 2008.

Randall D. Vaughn
Director
Professional Licensing Boards

Posted: August 12, 2008

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE
GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS
Rule 135-6-.03 Biennial Renewal Cycle. Amended.**

Purpose: The purpose of this rule is to clarify the time frame and the requirements for completion of the biennial renewal cycle.

Main Features: The rule provides further clarification of the time frame and the requirements for completion of the biennial renewal cycle.

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE EXISTING RULE AND THE
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE
GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE
AND FAMILY THERAPISTS
Rule 135-6-.03 Biennial Renewal Cycle. Amended.**

[Note: underlined text is proposed to be added; lined-through text is proposed to be deleted.]

135-6-.03 Biennial Renewal Cycle. Amended.

(1) All licenses shall expire on September 30 of even numbered years. All licensees must apply for renewal. A licensee who does not intend to practice in Georgia and who therefore does not intend to practice or to use the title Professional Counselor, Social Worker, or Marriage And Family Therapist may apply to convert an active license to inactive status. (Refer to Rule 135-6-.06).

(2) Renewal notices are only sent as an accommodation. The responsibility of license renewal remains with the license holder.

(3) The applicant for renewal shall submit to the Board, on or before ~~June~~ September 30 of even numbered years:

~~(a) a completed application for renewal;~~

~~(b)~~ (a) the biennial renewal fee (See Fee Schedule);, and

(b) certification to the Board that he/she has completed education required for renewal

~~(c) Evidence of having satisfied the continuing education requirement during the preceding two year period, beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of even numbered years.~~

(c) When the license is initially issued during the second year of the renewal period after October 1 of the odd numbered year the continuing education requirements are waived.

~~(4) Applications for renewal of licenses submitted between July 1 and September 30 of even numbered years will be considered late and will be required to pay a late fee (See Fee Schedule).~~

~~(5)~~ (4) Unless the license is renewed on or before September 30 of even numbered years, continued practice after such date shall constitute unlawful practice and is grounds for discipline.

~~(6)~~ (5) If an application for renewal is submitted to the Board within 3 months of expiration of the license, the licensee must pay a penalty fee as assessed by the Board (See Fee Schedule). ~~Failure to renew a license by the end of the established penalty period, which is December 31 of the renewal year, shall have the same effect as a~~

~~revocation and reinstatement of the revoked license shall be in the discretion of the Board.~~

Authority O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-4, 43-1-7, 43-1-19, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-14, 43-10A-15, 43-10A-16 and 43-10A-17.